

Message Text

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42

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 SSC-01 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

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R 301500Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9742

INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PRETORIA 1819

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, SF

SUBJECT: CABINET RESHUFFLE

1. OPENING TRANSVAAL CONGRESS OF NATIONAL PARTY APRIL 29, PRIME MINISTER VORSTER ANNOUNCED SOME CHANGES IN SAG CABINET. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT, VACATED BY RETIREMENT OF BEN SCHOEMAN, WAS GIVEN TO MINISTER OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AND OF POLICE, LOUWRENS MULLER. ECONOMIC AFFAIRS WENT TO SENATOR OWEN HORWOOD, PRESENT MINISTER OF TOURISM AND OF INDIAN AFFAIRS. DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE, OF INTERIOR, AND OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND PENSIONS, JIMMY KRUGER, WAS ELEVATED TO MINISTER OF POLICE, AND ALSO ASSUMED JUSTICE AND PRISONS PORTFOLIOS, WHICH BECAME OPEN UPON RETIREMENT OF MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND OF PRISONS, PIET PELSER. TOURISM AND INDIAN AFFAIRS WERE GIVEN TO CHRIS HEUNIS, FORMER DEPUTY MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS. HENNIE SMIT, MP FOR STELLENBOSCH, BECOMES DEPUTY MINISTER OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND

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PENSIONS, AND WILLEM CRUYWAGEN, MP FOR GERMISTON, REPLACES

KRUGER AS DEPUTY MINISTER OF INTERIOR. A NEW PORTFOLIO, DEPARTMENT OF POWER, WAS CREATED AND GIVEN TO MINISTER OF WATER AND FORESTRY, S.P. (FANIE) BOTHA. APPROPRIATE BIOGRAPHIC DATA BY POUCH.

2. COMMENT: THERE WERE NO SURPRISES IN NEW MINISTERIAL APPOINTMENTS, NOR HAS THERE BEEN ANY REAL INFUSION OF NEW BLOOD INTO CABINET. SMIT AND CRUYWAGEN ARE LITTLE MORE THAN PARTY HACKS. SMIT, WHO HAS BEEN MP FOR STELLENBOSCH SINCE 1958 AND CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER OF NATIONAL PARTY SINCE 1969, HAS BEEN PASSED OVER THE CABINET POSTS BEFORE. BOTH HE AND CRUYWAGEN BEGAN THEIR POLITICAL CAREERS AS MEMBERS OF NP'S NASIONALE JEUGBOND, THE PARTY'S YOUTH WING, AND WORKED THEIR WAY UP TO PARLIAMENT. ACCORDING TO RAND DAILY MAIL, SMIT IS WELL-KNOWN FOR HIS PENCHANT FOR WARNING OF "DANGERS OF COMMUNISM, TERRORISM, SABOTAGE...AND HIS CONDEMNATION OF WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES."

3. RELATIVE UNIMPORTANCE OF RESHUFFLE IS BORNE OUT BY FACT THAT MAKEUP OF CABINET IS BASICALLY UNCHANGED, AND THAT SUCH VERKRAMPTES AS MINDEFENCE P.W. BOTHA, MINLABOR MARAIS VILJOEN AND MINBANTU AFFAIRS M.C. BOTHA RETAIN THEIR POWERFUL POSITIONS IN THE CABINET. HALLMARK OF VOSTER'S CABINET WILL CONTINUE TO BE MEDIOCRITY. THOSE WHO WERE EXPECTING THAT CABINET APPOINTMENTS WOULD PROVIDE SOME INDICATION OF POSITIVE MOVES IN RACE RELATIONS MUST SURELY BE DISAPPOINTED. CERTAINLY CABINET DOES NOT EMBODY A VERLIGTE NEW LOOK, AND IF ANY SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN RACE POLICIES ARE IN THE OFFING, THEY WILL REQUIRE A STRONG PUSH FROM VOSTER HIMSELF, IF HE IS SO INCLINED.
HURD

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